

HONORING THE SERVICE OF  
ELAINE T. VALENTE

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 10, 2005*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor a good friend and a hard-working public servant, Ms. Elaine Valente. Elaine is retiring as a Commissioner for Adams County, Colorado after 16 years of dedicated service.

Commissioner Valente was born and raised in Adams County Colorado. She and her husband Larry own the successful Valente's Deli, are proud parents of two accomplished children, and are passionate community activists.

Elaine's interest in her community began long before assuming her role as County Commissioner. She served on the Adams County Planning Commission, the city of Westminster Urban Renewal Authority, the Westminster Planning Commission, the Citizen's Evaluation for Retention of Judges, and the School District 50 Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee.

Her deep passion to give something back to her community and to help improve Colorado is what motivated her to run for County Commissioner in 1988. Elaine was victorious in that election and quickly became an outspoken advocate for Adams County's communities. As Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners she took and interest in many issues affecting her constituency, helping pave the way for future economic development, transportation improvements, air traffic investments and reform of county services. When I was elected to Congress in 1998 I knew that one of my first objectives was to learn as much as I could from Elaine, not only about one of Colorado's fastest growing communities, but also about effective public service.

Elaine is the kind of person who speaks her mind with a blend of honest bluntness and old-school graciousness. As a daughter of Italian-Americans she also established a reputation for leadership on behalf of ethnic minorities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Elaine Valente and in wishing her success in all her future endeavors. It has been a true privilege to work with such a remarkable woman.

TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF  
WARRENSBURG, MO

**HON. IKE SKELTON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 10, 2005*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to congratulate and pay tribute to the city of Warrensburg, Missouri, which will celebrate its 150th birthday this year.

Warrensburg, Missouri, was incorporated as a town in 1855, after being settled by local farmers and a blacksmith named Martin Warren. Mr. Warren had a blacksmith shop which served as an informal gathering place for the local farmers. Mr. Warren's shop was named the county seat of the newly created County of Johnson. The township was named Warren's Burg, in honor of the blacksmith.

Warrensburg citizens have many reasons to be proud of their city. One of these reasons is the city's excellent school system. With an enrollment of 3,200 students, the district is accredited with Distinction in Performance by the Missouri State Board of Education. Also, the city is home to Central Missouri State University, which has provided fine post secondary education for more than 130 years.

Warrensburg also is home to many prominent businesses and organizations. EnerSys, GE Transportation Systems, Swisher Mower, Sigma Tau Gamma Fraternity world headquarters and Carlyle Van Lines have all thrived in the city, and there are countless other businesses—small and large—that contribute to the economic well being of Warrensburg.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to the citizens of Warrensburg, Missouri, for this outstanding accomplishment. I know all the Members of Congress will join me in paying tribute to a great American city.

CONDEMNING THE COMMENTS OF  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES  
MATTIS

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 10, 2005*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, last week, United States Marine Corps LTG James Mattis made public comments that were unbecoming of a military officer. As quoted in numerous newspaper articles and media broadcasts, Lieutenant General Mattis told a San Diego, California audience of 200 civilians that "It's fun to shoot some people." Referencing combatants in Afghanistan he added, "You know, guys like that ain't got no manhood left anyway. So it's a hell of a lot of fun to shoot them."

Lieutenant General Mattis has no doubt served his country with courage and distinction as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. It is, nonetheless, inexcusable that, as a high-ranking officer of the U.S. military, he would make these callous and insensitive remarks that denigrate the value of human life.

Furthermore, comments of this nature reinforce negative perceptions of U.S. military actions abroad and have the potential to incite greater animosity toward our troops. The price to be paid for this irresponsible conduct cannot be exaggerated given the vital role support from the Iraqi people and the international community is to the success of ongoing operations in Iraq.

The U.S. Marine Corps Commandant has said that he has counseled Lieutenant General Mattis with regard to his comments. However, it is incumbent on our military's leadership to ensure that this behavior is not repeated on the part of Lieutenant General Mattis or any other military officer in the future.

It is critically important that a clear and resounding message is sent that this type of conduct will not be tolerated in the United States military. It is wholly inconsistent with the values we hold dear as Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard enough in this day and age to protect my 9-year-old-son—or any child—from graphic violence rife in popular video games, which demean the value of human life and portray killing as just a game—

an act without moral consequence. I suppose they make war look like fun, but tell that to the over 10,000 Americans who've been critically wounded or the families of the nearly 1,500 Americans who gave their lives in Iraq.

Now, we have a general from the field saying how fun it is to shoot people. I think that's wrong, its despicable, it's an unconscionable message to be telling our children.

It is time to put a stop to this unnecessary, obscene war in Iraq and the obscenities of generals like James Mattis, both of which demean and denigrate the moral fabric of our country.

HONORING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 1, 2005*

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased that Congress has recognized the important role that Catholic schools play in our community by bringing House Resolution 23 before the House floor.

As a proud Catholic, I know the impact that faith-based education can have in our society and have witnessed it first hand in my district. Schools such as the St. Thomas Aquinas High School in San Bernardino, California, are highly regarded for their academic and athletic excellence, as well as the life-changing opportunities they provide to their students.

Under the leadership of Bishop Gerald Barnes, the San Bernardino Diocese school system has invested in the future of our children by providing them the educational tools to succeed.

Catholic schools in our Nation's education have been paramount in teaching the values that we as parents seek to instill in our children.

They are sources of goodwill and arbiters of moral values, providing strong foundations for young people. Their curriculums are often full of programs in character development and community service.

Catholic school graduates exhibit a wide variety of qualities that will not only help them in their careers but also in their family and community lives.

It gives me no greater pleasure than to support this resolution today honoring the contributions of Catholic schools and I commend Congressman KENNEDY for his sponsorship.

I also ask and pray for the quick recovery of Pope John Paul II, so that he may continue to lead the Catholic Church and help oversee the Catholic school system and their good works.

GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL  
BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

SPEECH OF

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 9, 2005*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 30, a resolution that recognizes and supports the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.